

H O N E S T Y

I S T H E B E S T

P O L I C Y .

by Mr. Laughton of the Temple.

THO Men are so transported, yet nevertheless I will at this Juncture endeavour to shew every Party what infinite *Hazards* they have run, what great *Losses* they have sustained, by partial Notions, unreasonable Aversions and Bigottries; and because I would yet heal and compose all our *Differences*, I shall avoid all *Sarcasm*, and *Levity* of Expression, and likewise because I rather consider the Dispute between the *King* and his *People*, than between *Him* and the *P. of Orange*: For I believe no unbiassed wise Man can, even now in his Conscience, think the Prince has dealt Honourably or Religiously by his Wives Father, and his own Uncle, unless the *Cameronian* Reflector, where he talks of the Difference betwixt Kingdoms and Families, had proved it more lawful to steal Crowns than Trifles, or rob so near Relations than other Men. The *King* and Mankind must forgive me if Justice command *insandum renouare dolorem*, to look a little into the Causes of the late *Civil Wars*. I am the farthest Man alive from justifying the execrable Murder of *King Charles* the First, but on the other hand I cannot say the People began that War without great Provocations from the *Ministers* of those days. I believe the *Laws of England* make the *Kings* of it unaccountable in their own Persons: But the *Monopolies*, the *Loans*, the *Ship-money*, and *illegal Imprisonments*, &c. were real Grievances: How fatal that War was, both to the *King's* and *Parliament* Party; how horrid in the Issue of it, in relation to the *Royal Blood*, may be read in our *Histories*, and is felt in our *Constitution*. But whence originally came all those Misfortunes? If any Man tells me long Stories of the *Religious Contentions*, I must confess I blame them, and I allow they had their weight; but I take the Root of those great Evils to proceed from Defects in our *Civil Constitution*: I will point out the *Defects*; but I neither have Authority, nor Genius, to propose the *Remedies*. Ever since *King Henry* the Seventh's time, the Nature and Element of the English Government have been altered, All Regular Governments (call them, and let the Titles of their Magistracy be what you please) partake of all the three several Sorts, but there are in all Climates eb-bings and flowings of the *Monarchical*, *Aristocratical*, and *Democratical* Particles of the Composition, and all the Counsels of State must be proportioned to those Alterations. Take a view of our Government before *Henry* the Seventh's time, and you find a *Monarch* whose Basis is *Aristocracy*, but if you will reflect solidly how he has stood since, it is upon the Foot of the People: *Queen Elizabeth* understood this, and govern'd happily, and her *Ministers Cecil, Essex, Rawleigh, Walsingham*, &c. were less her *Minions* than they were the *Favourites* of the People. Tho her Title was disputable, *Protestancy* but new, *Spain* powerful and ambitious; by pursuing large Measures, and

taking beloved Men into her Counsels, and by suffering them to Advise honestly, she was too hard for all the Difficulties she met with, and, after a long Reign, lay'd down her Head in Peace; I think *Princes* may learn Lessons out of her Life, Yet I will not be her *Panygerist*, for I think she was sometimes *Arbitrary*, but herein I think she Excelled, to wit, That when any thing began to be generally disliked, she soon heard the Voice of the *People*, and gave way to the impetuosity of National Discontents, and so was a greater Mistress of *Crown-craft* than most of her Predecessors, or those that succeeded her. *K. Charles* the I. tho a Prince of many Royal Virtues, was a little too tenacious of his Purposes, and thought himself a greater Judge of National Exigencies than a House of Commons think any King ought to be; and after all the Schemes of the Schools, and the Advices of Flatterers, no King of these Kingdoms can sit sure, that is not well with *Parliaments*. There are Propensities to which all Constitutions of State must be adjusted, and the *Bodies of Men* will every where be too hard for all Speculations. A thirst after *Liberty* expell'd the *Kings of Rome*, and there were Indications of almost absolute *Monarchical* Dispositions in the *Factions* of *Marius*, *Scylla*, and *Catiline*, before *Cesar's* perpetual Dictatorship; The Revolt of the *Low Countries* from the *Spanish Government*, when in all its height and strength, shews no Armies can be too hard for Universal Resolutions, and is a *Memento* to all Crowned Heads, That where a Monarch will strain the bonds of Government in despite of the People, they will break them. When the Barons were able to make War upon slight Pretences, if the *Kings* kept fair with the Barons they were safe, but the Crown, the Barons, and the greater Gentry since the Barons, could sell their Lands, and the Court of Wards has been taken away, and the Crown has disposed of its Lands; can govern no longer Securely than they have Reputation with the People. Government must follow in a great measure the Nature of the Tenures, and there must be an *Agrarian* Law for Power where the Lands are so distributed: You see I have started many bold Hints, but I am not willing to draw them out at length, nor to write over closely where I may endanger the good Opinion of all Sides: But I will conclude upon this point, That since the *Princes* have had an Inclination to greater Power than the People will comply with; and the People a stronger Lust after *Liberty* than our *Kings* were willing to satisfy; That the one has mistaken *Prerogative*, and the other as much their Privileges, it would be well if a New *Magna Charta* was made to explain and assert each; This would be a happy Conclusion of our Troubles; This would turn our Swords into Plowshares, and has been heretofore the more warrantable product of those Stirrs that Male-administrations occasioned. Thus

our Parliaments could not be corrupted, nor our judicial Proceedings precarious; Englishmen have now an Opportunity to secure these good Things, For since Providence has itself been pleased so to order it, that the *King* has been defeated in *Ireland*, and the *French* have received so great a Loss at Sea, we have no longer reason to dread a *French* or an *Irish* Conquest; and the *King* cannot but now know, That he can never come to wear the Crowns of these Nations, unless he will make such Condescensions as are proper for our Circumstances, as are necessary to secure both our Religion, and our Property. I have been with him since his *Exile*, and the last Words he said to me were, That he sent me home to make a *BARGAIN* with his People; But I did not meet with People whose Minds were prepared to propose just and equitable Expedients. He knows I would not make ill Conditions for my Country; I have been suspected of being over nice and zealous for it, I confess I am more concerned for its Welfare than for all my own nearest and dearest Interests; yet I can very well comply with the Equal and Hereditary Monarchy of *England*. I never was an Enemy to the word Monarchy, nor designed to interrupt the Succession of the Crown; nor do I think it the Interest of any Man that loves Peace, and these Nations, to do it: On the contrary, I at this day affirm, tho we ought always to have expected Terms from *King James*, or have sent them to him, We ought not (tho I would have good Ones) even now to make such as would make him justly Uneasy; so unreasonable Ones, as would be unfit for him to grant. We must deal impartially, if we would ever compose Things; We ought to shew our Civility, or at least our Necessity, and we ought to couch Things in such Words, as tho they speak plainly our Sense, may have a due Regard to his Dignity. *Forgiveness* and *Righteousness* have been preached to him, as the certain Establishment of his Throne: He has been humbled by Afflictions: He has heard of his Mistakes, and has hearkned to free Advice: He has Reason to have it, and he has Temper, and perhaps both he and we may be the better for our Tribulations, if we once accommodate our Disputes. I never flattered the *King*; I have spoken plainer to him than I write now, and I believe I am not the less acceptable to him for my Plainness: And as to any Objection and Scruple that may be raised by a Declaration that is Published in his Name, I must say, I know no more than he that Reflects upon it, whether it be *King James's* Declaration or no: For about three Years since, there was a Declaration Published in his Name, and for the Spreading of which several People were Imprisoned, That I was afterwards told by the Author *King James* knew nothing of. And I must say further, That that Declaration that has been lately Published does not answer to the Spirit I left him in many Months ago; for, as I said,

* The Word *BARGAIN* is a term of condescending Language.

he told me he sent me to make a *BARGAIN*, to know what it was his People would have. I can't answer for what Accounts other People sent him; but I am sure he will to far justify me, as to say I have been ever against excepting Mens Lives or Fortunes. I have been ever for being very Explanative about the Liberties of my Country, and if any body with him, or any here, have led him into Measures that are disgustful to the People, I think I may boldly aver, It is Misinformation, and not Malice, that makes him liable to Misconstruction. Those that wish for the best Things are the shyest, have ever been too shy towards him; and it is not impossible that this Government may bribe Somebody to give too plausible Names and Reasons for those Things that may turn to the *King's* Prejudice, as some did here before the Prince of *Orange* came: But the day that he really refuses from any sort of Men, that can shew a probability of bringing him home, any Proposals that have tendency to Universal Good, he gives leave to his Subjects to have recourse to the Laws of Self-preservation; Then, and not till then,

he Abdicates his Crown. This is speaking plain English you see I speak plainly concerning what the *King* must do; Therefore let me also speak some plain Truths, and rehearse some Matters of Fact, to my Countrymen. And here I will begin with asserting, That if the People would be true to themselves at the Restoration, and careful in the Elections of Members to Parliament, we need no other Treaty, but what the *King* will be forced to make good in the first Sessions. We need not fear *French*, or *Papists*; We are too large and too brave a Country to be a Plantation; *France* cannot spare from off the Continent Men enough to govern us contrary to our Inclinations. And tho our Histories talk of our being Conquered any Man of Sense sees it was by Composition; It was from Parties within, and not from Force without us. As for the Roman Catholics their Numbers are inconsiderable, and tho they have good Estates, and some Men of great Natural Sagacity amongst them; yet their having been out of Business keeps them from understanding the Knack and Turns of it: And, whatever weak People think a King of that Perswasion in a Protestant Country is more properly than any other Laws can make him a *de bene placito* King. Sir *Will. Temple's* Observations upon the *Netherlands*, and his Essay upon Governments, can never be too often read by Prince, or People: The one may be taught by it how to Govern, and the other cured of unreasonable Fears. Standing Armies are the justest dread to Civil Liberties, but they are many ways as dangerous to Kings as they can be to their People. A beloved General may turn their Competitor, and every Mutiny shakes their Thrones: And the King that will make his Subjects Slaves by their hands, must be as much and more a Slave to them. If the Troops are Foreign he must be the Tributary and Vassal of that Prince who lends them; and if they are home-bred Forces, the Dispositions of the Populace will infect the Army: But besides all this, no Country, tho they may maintain Forces enough to suppress a sudden Insurrection, can possibly maintain enough to govern contrary to the general Genius of the Nation. The People of *Turky* hold all their Lands of the Crown, and like their Government; and as for the *Peasants* of *France*, they talk daily of their grand Monarch. An ill concerted Conspiracy may miscarry. Hot-headed Men may expect too soon to fire their Country-men, but general Dissatisfactions are no more to be withstood than general Conflagrations: When Necessity and Self-preservation arm Men, let their Weapons be what they will, they will cut their way through all Opposition. Indeed if a People are divided, as we are, the Danger must be common, or very notorious, before they make use of their Intrinsic Power. But if some Laws were enacted to keep Ecclesiastick Controversies out of the Pulpit, and the People were not taught to believe what in cases of Extremity humane Nature will never practise, If Divines are not suffered to dispose of the Kingdoms of this World, Civil Crimes and Rights will be soon called by their proper Names, and we shall recover our Liberties in a Parliamentary way before Things grow desperate: It is dangerous, and ought to be criminal, for them to pretend to set out the Boundaries of Government: They may preach in general submission to Authority, but they are not to bring Texts of Scripture, and much less *Aristotle's Ideas*, or *Zenophon's Cyrus*, to overthrow our *Statute-books*, and depreciate the Laws of *England*. By an Act of Parliament in the time of *King James* the First, no Man that was not Batchellor in Divinity was to preach about Predestination, or Free-will, because that Controversy then troubled the Church; and sure I am, That the Clergy of no Degree ought to preach about the Prerogative, and our Privileges. Their Stake is not generally great enough to keep them from Flattery and sinister Interpretations, by which too many of their Predecessors have been raised to Church-Dignities. They understand not our Laws, nor have they much credit for these Reasons with the People;

People; and they ought now to have less, since so many of their Coat have *prevaricated*. In a word, They ought by their Function to understand the Mysteries of Religion, and leave the *Arcana Imperii* to the Lay-men. They ought to be punished if they call Men Idolaters, Schismatics, Fanatics, Rebels, Traytors, Seditious Persons, with the *&c.* of their *Billingsgate* Rhetorick. Liberty of Conscience will make one part ill Manners, and Crimes against the State are proper for the Cognizance of the Civil Power; nor do I believe it was ever better'd by the Interposition of any Sort of Priests: Nor indeed is Religion it self the better for the Affectation of the Gentlemen of that Robe to intermeddle with Matters merely Temporal. But God knows they are too often buzzing, that this and that Thing is Republican; and they have neediest Apprehensions for their Church. As for the Common-wealth Principles, scarce any body carries them so far as to be against having a Single Person at the Head of our Affairs; and as for chopping and changing Kings, or rebelling when their is Occasion, I do not find the Church of England is so much behind hand with any other Sect: She can lead the Dance, and tho she may pretend Weariness before it is at an end, yet she can comply for Company. But after all this is said, I think her of all the several Churches the best for this Nation, and to do almost all English-men; which leads me, as the Parsons Parate it, to shew the unreasonableness of her Fears. As much as the Church of England Men have carrell'd and writ for an Arbitrary Power, **NOTHING ELSE CAN PULL DOWN THEIR CHURCH**; and she might see by what followed the two Tolerationes since the Royal Blood was Restored, That however she has treated the Dissenters, they will never join to pull down the Church of England, and let in *Papery*: Nor will she ever again be wornd out of her Discipline, if she never yields to Comprehension, **OR IS NOT TOO PLAINLY AN ENEMY TO CIVIL SECURITIES**. But I have made too long a Digression; and perhaps some may uncharitably think I like too much the subject Matter of it, but I only design the good of the Clergy, and the general Peace of England. No Man can have a greater value than my self for all those of that Order that are serious Christians, and Sufferers for their Principles; but if they will consider how many of those that were in the late Civil Wars, and in this Revolution, went constantly to the Church of England, they will not think it very Advisable for Princes to govern themselves by supposing that that Men will live up to Doctrines that (I shall not say) are mistaken in Idea; but only assert that they are too Self-denying to be expected in practice from our profligate Age. I make profession of great Plainness, but I beg a candid Interpretation from the Church of England, for what I have said; And from the *Whigs* of all Sorts for what I am about to say to them. I think they have not made the wisest Use of the Kings they have quarrell'd with, and that they are too frantically Apprehensive of Slavery. There are great Lengths that all Mankind will go with them. Many of the Church of England joy'd with their Principles at the beginning of the late Civil Wars; and their Consciences did not misgive them, till they had humbled that *unfortunate Prince* into such Concessions as would have effectually secured the Rights of English-men. Let any body look over the *Offers* that King made, and especially at the *Isle of Wight Treaty*, and then tell me, Whether there was any Reason to bring the Reproach of King Charles's Murder upon these Nations. I am not just if I don't say the *Whigs* are too soon displeased, and carry their Points too far, and that they overrate their Numbers; The Men of the best Quality and Estates have generally a mind to Peace, and are not so eager for Critical Reformati^ons. Some of the *Whigs* therefore start Grievances before others feel them, and are hazarding our very Fundamentals for the Chimera's of a warm Imagination, and a punctilious Nicety, which jollier Heads

and sweeter Natures can never comprehend; and at last they weaken themselves by *Subdivisions*: They spin their Thread too fine, their *Speculations* are scarce Practical, and end in *Vision*; Tho they are for Liberty in Religion, they are for Persecution, for Fire and Fagot, for Extremity in Politics. The Bulk of *Freeholders* will stick by Essentials, but the *Whigs* almost Nick-name their own Notions, and then it is no wonder if the *Tories* take them for Scarecrows and Bulbeggars, and that the *Propagators* of such Doctrines are represented *unreasonable Men*, rather *Beaufeux* than *Patriots*: You out word your own Opinions, and you talk *Hyperboles* and *Catachreses*, and the *Tories* think you *Lunatics* because they don't understand your Language. you ought seriously to consider your Numbers, and you will not find disproportion enough between you and those *Tories* to make it reasonable that they should wholly subscribe your *State Creed*; and perhaps there will be less reason if you look back and find that the same *ferce Men* of that Party (and God knows there are such in all Parties) may have been for screwing up Monarchy too high, yet many that are for supporting the Church of England, and limited successive Monarchy, have always joyn'd in all honest and moderate Things. Indeed when King Charles the Second returned, his first Parliament gave him more Power than they were afterwards willing he should keep; but were not the *Whigs* as mad at the Inauguration of the Prince of Orange? If the Church of England, in the Reign of that Prince, did not hunt to hard when the *Popish Plot* was on Foot; I suppose many of you are at this day convinced you were too *Kem*, and that the Business was a little over Swore. If they oppos'd the Bill of Exclusion, without peradventure they were in the Right of it: For it was purely Personal in its Regards; loving one Man more than Liberty, and Hating another more than Slavery; and miserable is that People whose Security is more from the Temper or Religion it self of the Magistrate, than the Constitution of the Government I cannot but bemoan what we lost by your heat at that Time. If you say the Church of England *Quo Warranto'd Corporations*, They did it no more than the Fanatics Regulated them. I think it unjust to charge Parties with the Faults of particular Persons. There was but a few of either Party concerned in either of those evil Steps; and its as unjust to take away the Reputation of either Party for the Miscarriages of those few, as to take away Charters for personal Mal-administrations; and I am confident that even all the Non-Swearers of the Church of England would have been willing to have ascertained our Constitution, and secured our Administration when the Prince of Orange came; they were weary of pretended unlimited Prerogative, to say no more, and I think I ought not if I would please them, or you. But pray what harm had it been if we had not changed the Name of our King, if we had altered the complexion of Affairs; is it not a shame, that Sir Thomas Clarges, and Sir Christopher Musgrave, &c. should have consulted Amendment more than those that have taken the Degree of Doctors at the King's head Club, and at Richard's Coffee-house? Is it not a shame that you would not make the Embryos of necessary Insurrections, less liable to prosecution in the last Session, and that you could in the Convention suspend the *Habeas Corpus*, tho when you gave the Crown you declar'd it a fundamental right? If you have Liberty to elect Kings, why are you so Angry at those that will Chuse their Old one again, and perhaps upon more honest Limitations than you Created yours? The word Limitation puts me in mind, that I promised to shew that you are too violently apprehensive of Slavery, and therefore I will once again say you did not make the best use of your Victories over King Charles the First, because you brought them to a point wherein the Consciences of most rebuked them, and wherein the generality were not likely to succumb, and you were as indiscreet in the management of King Charles the Second's timorous Nature, who would have denied scarce any thing

thing but the Bill of *Exclusion* at the time that that was first on Foot, and indeed would have found no Party to buoy him up in the denial of any thing else: To obviate your unreasonable fears of Slavery, I beseech you to consider whether History gives an Account of any People that have been made Slaves but by their own Inclinations to be so, unless by an entire Conquest; and I once again affirm, it is not in the Power of *France* to conquer *England*, unless by our own Divisions; and those Divisions would soon cease, if we did not oppose the bringing home King *James* upon civil Securities. The Prince of *Orange*, hates the Persons of the *Whigs*, and more their Principles, and makes all those of them he impleies, change them, or at least act against them; yet their implacable hate to King *James* will not let them, tho they have so much punish'd him, and themselves, forgive Errors in him, which they commend in this Man; and if King *James* is ever Restored it will be easy to misrepresent their Notions by reason of the Men that profess them: Whereas would they plead for their Liberties under a Restoration, and not talk in prejudice of the Establish'd Worship of the Church (to pull down which is neither the Business, nor the desire even of any wise Dissenter) the Church of *England* will joyn to ask and expect all Things that can make our Constitution happy and Stable, not only under any Popish but under all Kings. Reflect seriously whether the body of the Nation, which is mostly composed of the Church of *England*, has not been Struggling these last 50 Years for more Liberty; this may instruct the *Whigs* that they need not fear the loss of it, and King *James* that he must give it. The nature of our Situation, of our Tenures, of our Inclosures, and especially of our People, is a full Security that we shall never loose our beloved Liberty and Property, unless the *Whig* Party are so unreasonable, that they chuse to embroil us in Civil Wars rather than to hearken to any Proposals from King *James*, or joyn with others to send Proposals to him. The Reduction of *Ireland*, and the Cessation of the *Higlanders*, have not ended the *Jacobite* Quarrel; and tho this Defeat of the *French* by Sea, damps the wild and visionary *Jacobite*, yet it will not put an end to our Miseries: Were King *James* dead, the Prince of *Wales* would be thought on; and those that believe successive Monarchy, are very much (what ere you think) satisfied of his Legitimacy. But were he, and the Child of which the Queen is lately delivered of, and King *James* also dead, if the Princess of *Orange* should die, the Princess of *Denmark* must be a most resigned Woman, if she did not ask for her Right: Whatever others can, I can yet see nothing but Confusion and Calamity, intollerable and eternal Taxes, together with the loss of Trade, and Honour on the one hand, and on the other hand, our antient Plenty, and our antient Government; without *Sunderland*, being remade Secretary of State, or a general Excise Establish'd, which are the resolv'd on Methods of King *William*: But I must yet give an Account of the most dreadful Hobgoblin of all, *Poper*y. I believe as little of its Creed, and as ill of its Practices, as any body; but I would take a new Method to civilize those wild Men that you think Beasts of prey. I would treat them better; I would enfranchise them; I blame neither *Papist* nor *Fanatick* for being in a Plot, till they are impartially dealt with: And yet I can, and do, and ever did, and I am confident we shall, comply with the Church of *England*; for my not personal Concern makes me say this, but a true Perswasion, that I have had these Twelve Years, That where a Nation is divided into Sects, Church and State Matters ought to be distinct. As we manage the point, the *Papists* will be Vassals for the Court of *Rome*;

and Spies for every Catholick Monarchy from whence they may hope a deliverance, as well as Flatterers of Prerogative; but if you would blend them with all the other Sects, they would not be tasted in the Composition, nor would they be looking for Succours from abroad. But when I have said all this, let the Roman Catholicks at their peril endeavour to be invidiously Preferred, or engross the King, we can put a Bear-Skin upon them, when we please; And if a King of their perswasion will be the King of their party, the next Revolution will extirpate *Papists*, and the *Royal Line* to boot; and now we can cut off, and abdicate Kings in the face of the World: We shall learn Massacres, and turn into a perfect Common wealth. I will allow you Gentlemen to believe Transubstantiation, but I advise you as a Friend not to trust to Miracles; but to allow that natural weight will be too hard for all your Superfine projections: So that tho I am for your having utmost Liberty, and tho I am as much an Enemy to Civil Inquisitions here, as to your Religious, or rather irreligious one in *Spain*, yet I would have you remember that I say you are to have that Liberty only upon your good Behaviour. If King *James* comes in, if you will not as industriously as any other Party promote the general Good. If you will not be as Zealous for it as your Predecessors when they got *Magna Charta*, you will be a hated Faction still, and find me too true a Prophet at last. I think the *French* never were, but I believe every body will allow that they have now no reason to be so Visionary as to expect to make us a Colony; and if any *Catholicks* or mad *Tories*, still expect Force from abroad, shall set King *James* upon the Throne, they are madder than any set of Men but those *Whigs* that fear a *French* Conquest, and from thence *Poper*y and *Slavery*.

I have treated upon odd Things, and in an unusual Manner, and perhaps shall have tired the Reader, but to speak in a very few Words the drift of the whole. It is to invite all my Country-men to be ready to receive the King upon such large and comprehensive Measures, as ought to satisfy all Parties, it is to incline all Parties, to be reasonable in their demands, and to persuade King *James* to give such Terms as the People will thank him for now, and will have, or eternally be restless and uneasy; it is to persuade all English men, to consider Church and Civil Matters a part; it is to incorporate all our Sects into one National Interest. It does allow Government from God, but the Specification from Men. It is not to quarrel with Hereditary Monarchy, but desires we may be safe in our Lives and Fortunes, and that we should Sacrifice them for the Publick against Enemies abroad, rather than by intestine Fars. In a word, all this Ramble is to persuade to a new *Magna Charta*: To Peace and Justice which God grant may be the Conclusion of all our dismal Appearances. I wish Men would rather cast about in their thoughts how to draw such a *Magna Charta* than to make opposition which can never determine the Controversy, as long as any one Branch of the *Right Line* is alive. I wish they would rather think who should Represent than who should Fight for them.

To conclude, I expect to please no one Party because I appear to be of none bigotly, but write for the general Good, tho I think what I have set down are Truths: Yet I fear they are too strong to be digested, they do not close with the Partialities of any sort of Men; however they are well meant, and I leave the issue to the great Disposer of all Things, and Men to jumble and cut, and be unfortunate, till they find by Experience according to the Title of this Discourse, That

Honesty, after all, is the best Policy.

